



第三話

うつぼ舟の話

Chapter 3

The Tale of the Utsūbo-bune

1918 - OUTSKIRTS OF
YEKATERINBURG, URAL REGION



SISTER,
WHAT IS
THAT?



YOU DON'T
GET ONE,
SILLY.

WAA,
YOU'RE SO
MEAN!

ОСГО

IT'S GLAGOLITIC WRITING.
THOSE SYMBOLS ARE THE
NAMES OF ALL THE GIRLS
IN OUR FAMILY - OLGA,
TATIANA, MARIA AND
ANASTASIA.

REALLY?
WHAT'S THE
SYMBOL FOR MY
NAME, THEN?





1904 (YEAR 37 OF THE MEIJI
ERA) ASAKUSA, TOKYO







SFX -[BLANK]-



SFX -[DONGDONGDONG!]-





THERE'S NO
SCIENTIFICALLY
POSSIBLE WAY
THAT A SEVERED
HEAD COULD
SPEAK.

THERE'S A
MIRROR INSIDE
THE TABLE
THAT REFLECTS
THE IMAGE OF
A BOY HIDING
OFFSTAGE.

IT'S A
SIMPLE
TRICK,
REALLY.



DON'T YOU LECTURE
ME, YOU POMPUS
BASTARD! WHILE
YOU'VE BEEN SITTING
ON YOUR ASS, I'VE
BEEN WORKING AS A
REPORTER ON THE
FRONT LINES!!



I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT
THAT SOMEONE AS DEDICATED
TO LITERARY REALISM AS
YOU ARE WOULD BE MORE
SKEPTICAL, TAYAMA-KUN?
OR PERHAPS EVEN YOU
ALLOWED YOURSELF TO BE
CARRIED AWAY?



HUH...? I
JUST NO-
TICED, BUT
YOU LOOK
TERRIBLE...



UGH...
WHATEVER.



HEY, IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER! SURE, THE RUSSIAN TROOPS ARE WEAK AND THE JAPANESE ARMY HAS BEEN SCORING A LOT OF VICTORIES, BUT PEOPLE ARE STILL DYING OVER THERE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ACTUALLY LEFT HOME!

IT'S REALLY CHANGED MY OUTLOOK ON LIFE...

HAHAHA!



ACTUALLY, I MOVED TO ASAKUSA SO I COULD AVOID BEING DRAFTED INTO THE ARMY

AA... WELL...

ANYWAY, I WENT LOOKING FOR YOU AT YOUR OLD BOARDING HOUSE, BUT THEY SAID YOU'D MOVED TO MAKUSA.



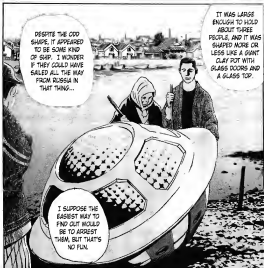
NOT REALLY. I JUST DIDN'T FEEL LIKE BEING SENT OFF TO WAR, SO I BRIBED A CONSCRIPTION INSPECTOR TO HAVE MYSELF CLASSIFIED AS "UNFIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE."

YOU SOCIALIZE WITH THE SLITS AS EASILY AS A FISH BREATHES WATER...

WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT, I STARTED WORKING WITH TANAKA KOREKIYO, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BANK OF JAPAN, TO SECURE FUNDING FOR MILITARY OPERATIONS...

SO YOU COULD SAY THAT I'VE BEEN HELPING OUT WITH THE WAR EFFORT THAT WAY!





DESPITE THE ODD SHAPE, IT APPEARED TO BE SOME KIND OF SHIP. I WONDER IF THEY COULD HAVE SAILED ALL THE WAY FROM RUSSIA IN THAT THING...

IT WAS LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD ABOUT THREE PEOPLE, AND IT WAS SHAPED MORE OR LESS LIKE A GIANT CLAY POT WITH GLASS DOORS AND A GLASS TOP.

I SUPPOSE THE EASIEST WAY TO FIND OUT WOULD BE TO ARREST THEM, BUT THAT'S NO FUN.



I FOUND THIS.



WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT THEY CAME TO JAPAN IN THAT WEIRD LITTLE BOAT?

YOU AND YOUR BIZARRE OBSESSIONS...

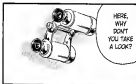


...HIM, SHE LOOKS LIKE THE GIRL WE SAW EARLIER... AND HE LOOKS LIKE THE BOY IN THE BOX, DOESN'T HE?

WHOA, THAT'S ONE FANCY-LOOKING FAMILY.



THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS LEFT INSIDE THE SHIP.



HERE, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LOOK?



I TOLD YOU, IT WAS JUST A MAGIC TRICK.

IT'S THAT KID! BUT HE'S GOT A BODY NOW.



JUST LOOK, YOU'LL SEE.

HIM? WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THESE?



AH!!



THERE'S A REAL
ARISTOCRATIC-
LOOKING LADY IN
THERE... I
WONDER WHO
SHE IS?



IT LOOKS LIKE
SHE'S HELPING
HIM TO DRINK
TEA... I GUESS
HE'S SICK?

WHAT'S
GOING ON
IN THE
NEXT
ROOM?



WELL, BACK IN THE
1900S, THERE WAS A
SUPPOSED "PSYCHIC
HEALER" CALLED
FRANZ MESMER
WHO GAINED QUITE A
FOLLOWING AMONG
THE HIGH SOCIETY
LADIES OF PARIS.

OH COME ON,
MATSUOKA-KUN!
HE'S PROBABLY
JUST A NORMAL
GUY.



SHE'S
APPARENTLY
ON GOOD
TERMS WITH
THAT PRIEST.

SHE'S
THE WIFE
OF A
CERTAIN
NAVAL
OFFICER.



WHAT'S THAT
SHADY-
LOOKING
RUSSIAN
DOING WITH
ALL THOSE
WOMEN?



AND IT'S NOT JUST
HER - FROM WHAT
I'VE SEEN, HE'S
GROWN SUSPICIOUSLY
CLOSE TO THE WIVES
OF SEVERAL MILITARY
LEADERS, GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS AND
BUSINESSMEN.



HE COULD
BE WITH
RUSSIAN
MILITARY
INTELLI-
GENCE!

...BUT
WHY?



I WANTED TO
BE ABLE TO
SPY ON THAT
RUSSIAN FROM
MY WINDOW.

TO BE
HONEST,
TAYAMA-KUN,
I DIDN'T JUST
MOVE TO
ASAKUSA TO
AVOID BEING
CONSCRIPTED.



AKASHI MOTOUTSUKI
USED HIS POSITION AS A
MILITARY ATTACHE IN
SWEDEN TO SPY ON THE
RUSSIANS, SO I
WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED
IF THE RUSSIANS HAD
SPIES HERE TOO.



WOWOW,
YOU'RE A
HERO! ALL
RIGHT.

SEE, I'M
DEFENDING
THE COUNTRY
ON THE HOME
FRONT!



I'M YOUR
FRIEND, AND
I STILL THINK
YOU'RE CRAZY

HOW
CRAZY! I
THOUGHT
WE WERE
FRIENDS.



NOBODY
WOULD BE-
LIEVE THAT
STORY.

WHAT,
YOU DON'T
BELIEVE
ME?















YOU KNOW ME -
I'M ALL ABOUT
MAKING MONEY!
HAHAHAH!!

WHAT'S
WITH THIS
BOOK...?

WHEN DID
YOU OPEN A
DETECTIVE
AGENCY...?



AND THEN
I CAN GET
THE STORY
PUBLISHED!
IT'S TRIPLE
THE PROFITS!!

I CAN CHARGE ONCE
FOR PERFORMING THE
VICTIM'S FUNERAL
SERVICE, AND THEN I
CAN CHARGE AGAIN
FOR SOLVING THE
CRIME!



ALL OF THESE
"VAMPIRE"
INCIDENTS
HAVE A
COMMON
POINT.

HMPH,
OF
COURSE
!

Okay,
okay...

I DON'T
WANT TO
HEAR THAT
FROM
YOU!!

IF YOU
WANNA GET
RICH IN THIS
BUSINESS,
YOU NEED TO
HAVE A
SYSTEM.

WHAT ABOUT
THE MURDER?
ANY IDEAS
ABOUT WHO
DID IT?









HOW
WOULD A
CORPSE
GET INTO
THE
ROOM?

WELL... THAT
DOESN'T SOLVE
THE MYSTERY
OF THE SEALED
ROOM, RIGHT?

WAIT, SO WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING IS
THAT THE KILLER
RE-ANIMATES
CORPSES TO DO
HIS BUSINESS...?



WELL,
THERE IS
ONE OTHER
THING...

...SASAYAMA-
SAN, DID THE
VICTIMS HAVE
ANYTHING ELSE
IN COMMON?



THESE ARE
A FEW OF THE
VAMPIRE'S
VICTIMS SO
FAR.

SOME OF THEM
WERE WIVES OF
MEN INVOLVED
WITH THE MINISTRY
OF FINANCE OR
THE BANK OF
JAPAN, AND ONE
WAS A MINISTRY
OFFICIAL.



SPIL ~"DOOR OPENING"~









THANK
YOU, SIR.

...I SEE. WELL,
I SUPPOSE I
COULD STAY
ELSEWHERE
TONIGHT. I'LL
LEAVE IT TO
YOU,
HATSUOKA-
KUN.



IF THE KILLER
IS GOING TO
TARGET TAKAWASHI,
SHOULDN'T WE BE
GUARDING HIM?



THIS
WHOLE LOCKED
ROOM MURDER
MYSTERY CRAP.



WHAT
PART
DOESN'T
MAKE
SENSE?

YOUR
THEORY
DOESN'T
MAKE ANY
SENSE.



THAT'S THE
DUMBEST
FUCKING
THING I'VE
EVER
HEARD.

Slip

YOU EXPECT ME
TO BELIEVE THAT
REANIMATED CORPSE
OF SOME HEADLESS
DEAD KID KILLED THOSE
PEOPLE AND SUCKED
THEIR BLOOD? WHAT,
DID THE HEAD FLY IN
THROUGH THE WINDOW
ALL BY ITSELF?







HM, IT
LOOKS LIKE
IT GRABBED
SOME
DOCUMENTS



...WHATEVER, YOU
CAN GLOAT ABOUT
IT LATER! RIGHT
NOW, WE'VE
GOTTA CATCH THAT
FLYING HEAD! I
THINK IT STOLE
SOMETHING!

SEE? I
TOLD YOU
SO!



NOW THAT
WE KNOW WHO'S
SECRETLY
FUNDING THIS
WAR, WE CAN
CHANGE
HISTORY!

HAHAHA!
WELL DONE,
ALEX!



CATCH!



WHO
CARES?
GO GET
THOSE
PLANS,
YAICH!

OK!



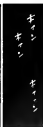
...BUT WHAT'S
THIS ABOUT
"CHANGING
HISTORY?"

DAMN IT,
IT'S JUST AS I
THOUGHT! THEY
WERE GATHERING
INTELLIGENCE ON
THE JAPANESE
WAR PLANS!





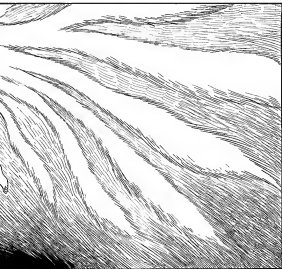




















I'M
ANASTASIA,
AND THIS
IS MY
BROTHER,
ALEXEI.

THAT MAN,
RASPUTIN...
HE'S BEEN
KEEPING MY
BROTHER
ALIVE ALL THIS
TIME.



...WE'RE
THE LAST
SURVIVING
MEMBERS OF
THE RUSSIAN
IMPERIAL
FAMILY.



YOU MEAN...
YOU'RE
FROM THE
FUTURE?

...IN
TEN
YEARS
IF?



WAIT A MINUTE...
I WAS A WAR
CORRESPONDENT
IN RUSSIA UNTIL
RECENTLY. THE
LAST I HEARD,
THE IMPERIAL
FAMILY WAS ALIVE
AND WELL!

THE
ROMANOV
FAMILY?



...IN TEN
YEARS, THE
IMPERIAL
DYNASTY WILL
FALL, AND
WE WILL BE
EXECUTED...

**NOOOO!!
ALEXEI!!**



...YES. IT'S
BEEN A
YEAR SINCE
WE FLED
RUSSIA.
THAT WAS IN
1918...

△ 亞魯 △





THIS BOY CARRIES THE BLOOD OF THE EMPEROR WHO HAD ME KILLED... BUT HIS BLOOD IS THE BLOOD OF ANOTHER RUSSIA AS WELL. AS LONG AS HE LIVES, OUR COUNTRY WILL SURVIVE.

BUT YOUR FATHER REFUSED TO HEED MY PROPHECIES.



YOUR BROTHER DIDN'T HAVE TO DIE LIKE THIS...

move



COME, ANASTASIA.

WE MUST GO THE PAST, AND CHANGE HISTORY.



I ONCE SWORE TO SAVE THE LIFE OF POOR ALEXEI, WHO SUFFERED FROM HEMOPHILIA.

LIFT

I WON'T LET HIM DIE NOW.



FATHER, CAN YOU REALLY SAVE HIM?

I CAN RESTORE HIS LIFE... BUT HE WILL NEED BLOOD TO SURVIVE.



ALL I EVER
WANTED
WAS TO BE
WITH MY
BROTHER...



HE SAID THAT
HE WOULD
PROVE TO LENIN
THAT WE HAD
THE POWER TO
CHANGE THE
PAST...

...BUT WE
FAILED.



...WAIT,
THE PRIEST
IS DEAD!
HOW IS THAT
KID STILL
ALIVE...?



WE CAN
STAY IN
THERE
FOREVER

...INSIDE
THE SHIP,
TIME
DOESN'T
MOVE.



SEX -CRASH FITTED SOUND-

SEX -CRASH FITTED SOUND-

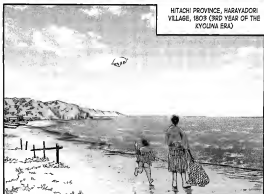


SEX -CRASH FITTED SOUND-









Translator's Notes

93 The title of this chapter refers to the story of the *Utsuro-bune*, one of the first "UFO legends," which was written about by Tanegita/Matsuoka Kunio (*Utsuro-bune* and *Utsubo-bune* both mean "hollow ship," but the "utsuro" spelling is more common.) According to the story, a strange capsule-like ship washed ashore in eastern Japan in 1803. A beautiful woman with red and white hair emerged from the ship, carrying a large box that she allowed no one to touch. After failing to communicate with the villagers, she returned to her ship and disappeared. "Utsubo" can also refer to hollow vessels (such as boxes, bottles or gourd) that contain gods or spirits. So "utsubo" means that something is both "empty" and spiritually "full."

94 The strange symbols are said to be the writing that was found written inside the *Utsuro-bune*. The symbols sort of resemble Glagolitic (an old Slavic writing system), but they aren't part of any known language.

94 The little girl is Anastasia, daughter of the last Russian emperor, and her brother is Prince Alexei. Both were murdered by revolutionaries along with the rest of their family in 1918... but rumors that Anastasia had survived persisted for decades. Prince Alexei suffered from hemophilia, a genetic disorder that caused uncontrollable bleeding. His desperate mother turned to a faith healer, Rasputin, to save her son. Rasputin gradually gained power within the Imperial court and came to symbolize the public's growing resentment towards the Imperial family. He was assassinated in 1916, shortly before the Imperial family was placed under house arrest.

97 The Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) is a major background plot point in this series. It was Japan's first modern war, and Japan's victory put the country on the world political stage. However, there were heavy Japanese casualties due to disease and malnutrition.

99 Shoutoku Taishi was a Japanese prince in the Late 500s who ruled as regent for Empress Suiko. He was a genius who reformed the political system, created Japan's first constitution, and promoted Buddhism. Additionally, he's renowned for his mystical power of foresight.

105 Akashi Kikojirou was a Japanese military official who set up a spy network throughout Europe in the early 1900s. He even managed to recruit British intelligence officer Sidney Reilly - the inspiration for James Bond - to secretly work for Japan. Akashi used his connections to funnel money and supplies to Russian anarchist groups, which weakened Russian military strength during the Russo-Japanese war.

118 Takahashi Korekiyo was a Japanese politician (and former English teacher) who played a prominent role in the Russo-Japanese war by securing foreign funding from the US and England. He eventually became Prime Minister. If you couldn't tell, Otsuka Eiji really likes name-dropping random Japanese historical figures in this manga!



MATSUOKA KUNIO
youkai
exterminator